

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Little Snake Field Office
455 Emerson Street
Craig, CO 81625-1129

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

EA NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-N010-2009-0001-EA

CASEFILE/ALLOTMENT NUMBER: 0500246/04607

PROJECT NAME: Renewal of the grazing permit on the Monument Butte Allotment #04607

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: see Allotment Map, Attachment 1

Monument Butte Allotment #04607

T4N R92W Portions of sections 24 & 25

125 acres BLM

412 acres private

537 acres total

APPLICANT: Jordan, Larry

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action and Alternatives are subject to the following plan:

Name of Plan: Little Snake Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision

Date Approved: April 26, 1989

Results: The Proposed Action has been reviewed for conformance with this plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3).

The Proposed Action is consistent with the Little Snake Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision, Livestock Grazing Management objective to improve range conditions for both wildlife and livestock through proper utilization of key forage plants and adjusting livestock stocking rates as a result of vegetation studies.

The allotment under the Proposed Action is located within Management Unit 1, Eastern Yampa River. The Proposed Action is compatible with the management objectives for this unit. Management objectives of the Eastern Yampa River Management Unit are to realize the potential for development of coal, oil, and gas resources. The Proposed Action would not conflict with these objectives.

NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION: The Proposed Action is needed to respond to an expiring permit. The previous permit was issued for the term 04/16/2005 to 02/28/2009. This permit is subject to renewal at the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior, who delegated the authority to BLM, for a period of up to ten years. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has the authority to renew the livestock grazing permit consistent with the provisions of the *Taylor Grazing Act*, *Public Rangelands Improvement Act*, *Federal Land Policy and Management Act*, and Little Snake Field Office's *Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement*. This Plan/EIS has been amended by *Standards for Public Land Health in the State of Colorado*.

The following Environmental Assessment will analyze the impacts of livestock grazing on public land managed by the BLM. The analysis will recommend terms and conditions to the permit/lease which improve or maintain public land health. The Proposed Action will be assessed for meeting land health standards.

In order to graze livestock on public land, the livestock producer (permittee) must hold a grazing permit. The grazing permittee has a preference right to receive the permit if grazing is to continue. The land use plan allows grazing to continue. This EA will be a site specific look to determine if grazing should continue as provided for in the land use plan and to identify the conditions under which it can be renewed.

PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS: The BLM Little Snake Field Office sent out a Notice of Public Scoping on December 17, 2007 to determine the level of public interest, concern, and resource conditions on the grazing authorizations that were up for renewal in FY 2009. A Notice of Public Scoping was posted on the Internet, at the Colorado BLM Home Page, asking for public input on grazing permit and lease renewals. Individual letters were sent to the affected permittees and lessees informing them that their permit and/or lease was up for renewal and requesting any information they wanted included or taken into consideration during the renewal process. The issuance of a grazing permit is being carefully analyzed within the scope of the specific action being taken, resources issues or concerns, and public input received.

BACKGROUND: The Monument Butte Allotment was renewed for a 10 year term in 1999 (CO-LS-99-022 EA). The authorization at that time was held by Mrs. Harry Jordan. The proposed action in CO-LS-99-022 EA reduced the Animal Unit Months (AUMs) by 9, from 23 to 14, and contained the following changes, "Season of use on the Monument Butte Allotment will be adjusted to reflect the dates livestock have been recently licensed in the allotment on an annual basis. The class of livestock in the Monument Butte allotment will be changed from cattle to horses which the permittee has been authorized to graze the past ten years".

The allotment was transferred from Cleo Jordan to Ethal Jordan in 2006 (CO-100-2006-001 CX). More recently, Ethal Jordan passed away and Larry Jordan (authorized representative for Ethal) is settling the estate and will be applying for transfer when settled.

The Monument Butte Allotment #04607 is in the "Custodial" (C) management category. This allotment lies approximately 15 miles south of Craig or 6 miles south of Hamilton. Access is from

Moffat County Road #45. Elevation of this allotment varies from approximately 6,600 to 7,250 feet. Surface runoff from the public land drains mostly into Morapos Creek to the east. The 1990 Allotment Categorization Record documented the grazing preference as being consistent with the authorized livestock use. A 1990's review of utilization monitoring information and a 1990's field inspection of this use indicate the key forage species are not being over-utilized by the specified livestock grazing permitted for this allotment. Most of the public land receives minimal livestock use due to steep topography, excessive brush cover, lack of water, and/or large boulders.

Monitoring Data

A recent allotment visit and monitoring on 08/12/2008 documented the following results (see allotment file for map and additional information).

Composition by Cover	Composition Woody/Browse Species
Annual Grasses = 26%	Sage = 20%
Perennial Grasses = 39%	Serviceberry = 21%
Annual Forbs = 10%	Juniper = 12%
Perennial Forbs = 8%	Snowberry = 8%
Litter = 4%	Bitterbrush = 11%
Bare Ground = 9%	Rabbitbrush = 20%
Rock = 3%	Oak = 7%

Other observations:

This allotment is currently authorized for horses, there is no horse sign to be found, there is however cattle sign and cattle loafing areas that would indicate either late winter or early spring use this past season.

Overall herbaceous utilization is light at an estimated 6-20% and only occurred near areas of cattle loafing.

Woody browse utilization is moderate on this date, but shows signs of annual heavy to severe use overall. Specifically, although good in abundance, serviceberry and bitterbrush is severely hedged with no plant being greater than two feet tall in many areas.

In certain areas it was noted that sagebrush is becoming more decadent and sparse and rabbitbrush is increasing and vigorous.

In certain areas annual grasses, primarily cheatgrass, is dominant and in other areas not present. This had a lot to do with soils, aspect, and slope. Overall the amount of annual grasses is of concern.

There was a lot of deer sign in the area, in the southern portion of the BLM land almost every shrub or tree had some degree of dug out loafing/shade areas on the north side of the plant.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Proposed Action

Renew the grazing permit on the Monument Butte Allotment #04607 for a period of ten years, expiring February 28, 2019. The permit would be reissued with a change in dates and class of livestock:

From:

Allotment Name & Number	Livestock Number & Kind	Dates From To		%PL	AUMs
Monument Butte #04607	20 Horse	04/16	12/09	9	14

No Special Terms and Conditions:

To:

Allotment Name & Number	Livestock Number & Kind	Dates From To		%PL	AUMs
Monument Butte #04607	25 Cattle	05/01	10/30	9	14

Special Terms and Conditions:

In conjunction with Common Terms and Conditions (A), no more than 50 cattle will be authorized in any one grazing season.

The permit would be subject to the Standard and Common Terms and Conditions (attachment 2)

No Action Alternative

No changes in the existing grazing permit would occur. The permit would be reissued with the same Terms and Conditions.

Allotment Name & Number	Livestock Number & Kind	Dates From To		%PL	AUMs
Monument Butte #04607	20 Horse	04/16	12/09	9	14

Alternatives Considered but not Analyzed:

No Grazing Alternative

No livestock grazing would take place under this alternative.

This alternative is eliminated from detailed study because it is not a realistic, implementable alternative nor does it meet the requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of

1976. When the RMP was approved, it was determined that livestock grazing was an appropriate use of this land. Eliminating grazing is not analyzed because no new issues or concerns have been identified that would require this action.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES/MITIGATION MEASURES

CRITICAL RESOURCES

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: There are no special designation air sheds or non-attainment areas nearby that would be affected by either alternative.

Environmental Consequences, All Alternatives: Authorizing livestock grazing in the Monument Butte Allotment would not cause regional air quality impairment under either of the alternatives. Proper grazing use which is required with the selection of either alternative would insure that sufficient native plant cover remains to protect the soil surface from excessive wind erosion. Vehicular access onto the public lands for livestock management activities would be very minor due to the lack of roads and steep to moderate slopes. Any fugitive dust generated from these sources or emissions from combustible engines would result in negligible releases of pollutants with no affect the overall air quality of the area.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Ole Olsen, 11/7/08

AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

Affected Environment: Not present

Environmental Consequences: None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: G. Robison, 11/04/08

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: Grazing authorization renewals are undertakings under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. During Section 106 review, a cultural resource assessment was completed for allotment #4607 by Robyn Watkins Morris, Little Snake Field Office Archaeologist. The assessment followed the procedures and guidance outlined in the 1980 National Programmatic Agreement Regarding The Livestock Grazing and Range Improvement Program, IM-WO-99-039, IM-CO-99-007, IM-CO-99-019, and IM-CO-01-026. The results of the

assessment are summarized in the table below. Copies of the cultural resource assessments are in the Field Office archaeology files.

Data developed here was taken from the cultural program project report files, site report files, and base maps kept at the Little Snake Field Office as well as from General Land Office (GLO) maps, BLM land patent records, An Overview of Prehistoric Cultural Resources Little Snake Resource Area, Northwestern Colorado, Bureau of Land Management Colorado, Cultural Resources Series, Number 20, and An Isolated Empire, A History of Northwestern Colorado, Bureau of Land Management Colorado, Cultural Resource Series, Number 2 and Appendix 21 of the Little Snake Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, Draft February 1986, Bureau of Land Management, Craig, Colorado District, Little Snake Resource Area.

The table below is based on the allotment specific analysis developed for the allotment in this EA. The table shows known cultural resources, eligible and need data, and those that are anticipated to be in each allotment.

Allotment Number	Acres Surveyed at a Class III Level	Acres NOT Surveyed at a Class III Level	Percent of Allotment Inventoried at a Class III Level	Eligible or Need Data Sites- Known in Allotment	Estimated Sites for the Allotment *(total number)	Estimated Eligible or Need Data Sites in the Allotment (number)
04607	0	536	0%	None	16	4

(Note *Estimates of site densities are based on known inventory data. Estimates should be accepted as minimum figures which may be revised upwards based on future inventory findings.)

No cultural resource inventories have been previously conducted within the allotment. The area contains a historic landmark noted on the early 1880's GLO maps. Two roads that run through the allotment have been there since the 1880's. The allotment is also known to be near the path of the troops heading south to the Battle of Milk Creek.

Based on available data, a low to moderate potential for historic properties occurs in allotment #4607. Subsequent cultural resource inventory will be conducted in areas where livestock concentrate. Subsequent field inventory is to be completed within the ten year period of the permit.

If historic properties are located during the subsequent field inventory, and BLM determines that grazing activities are adversely impact the properties, mitigation will be identified and implemented in consultation with the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

A letter was sent to the Uinta and Ouray Tribal Council, Southern Ute Tribal Council, Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Council on May 5, 2008. The letter listed the FY08 and FY09 projects that the BLM would notify them on and projects that would not require notification. A follow up phone call was performed on June 16, 2008. No comments were received (letter on file at the Little Snake Field Office). This project requires no additional notification.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: The direct impacts that occur where livestock concentrate, during normal livestock grazing activity, include trampling, chiseling, churning of site soils, cultural features and cultural artifacts breakage, and impacts from standing, leaning, and rubbing against historic structures, above-ground cultural features, and rock art. Indirect impacts include soil erosion, gullying, and increased potential for unlawful collection and vandalism. Continued livestock use may cause substantial ground disturbance and cause cumulative, long term, irreversible adverse effects to historic properties. Placing saltblocks along roads or anywhere in the allotment would potentially impact historic properties. In this alternative the timing of the AUMs is reduced and therefore would reduce the potential for impacts to unknown historic properties.

Environmental Consequences, No Action Alternative: Same as the Proposed Action with the potential for greater impacts to unknown historic properties with a longer season of use.

Mitigation Measures: Standard Stipulations for cultural resources are included in Standard Terms and Conditions for the Range Renewal Permit (Attachment 2).

Conducting Class II and III survey(s), monitoring, and developing site specific mitigation measures will mitigate the adverse effects to an acceptable level (Cultural Matrix Team Meeting 26 January 1999, NHPA Section 106, 36CFR800.9; Archaeological Resource Protection Act 1979; BLM Colorado and Colorado SHPO Protocol 1998; and NEPA/FLPMA requirements).

Name of specialist and date: Robyn Watkins Morris, 10/27/08

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Affected Environment: The proposed action is located in an area of isolated dwellings. Ranching, farming and oil/gas development are the primary economic activities.

Environmental Consequences, All Alternatives: The project area is relatively isolated from population centers, so no populations would be affected by physical or socioeconomic impacts of either alternative. Neither alternative would directly affect the social, cultural or economic well-being and health of Native American, minority or low-income populations.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Mike Andrews, 10/27/08

FLOOD PLAINS

Affected Environment: No floodplains occur within the Monument Butte Allotment.

Environmental Consequences: None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Ole Olsen, 11/7/08

INVASIVE, NONNATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: Invasive and noxious weeds are present in the allotment and surrounding areas. Invasive annuals such as cheatgrass, blue mustard, and yellow alyssum commonly occur and are occupying disturbed areas, plant interspaces, and areas where livestock concentrate. Cheatgrass is on the Colorado List C of noxious weeds. Colorado List B noxious weeds that may be found in or near the Monument Butte Allotment include houndstongue, Canada thistle, hoary cress (whitetop), leafy spurge, dalmation toadflax, oxeye daisy, Russian knapweed, black henbane, musk thistle, bull thistle and other biennial thistles. The BLM is in cooperation with the Moffat County Cooperative Weed Management program to employ the principals of Integrated Pest Management to control noxious weeds on public lands.

Environmental Consequences, All Alternatives: The adverse impact of increased invasive and/or noxious weed establishment is very similar under either of the alternatives. Vehicular access to public lands for dispersed recreation and grazing operations, livestock and wildlife movement, as well as wind and water, can cause weeds to spread into new areas. Surface disturbance due to livestock concentration and human activities associated with grazing operations can also provide opportunity for increased weed presence. The perennial noxious weeds found in the area are less frequently established on the uplands but some potential exists for their establishment in draws and swales with moister soils. Proper grazing use by livestock is necessary to maintain a resilient native plant community that can help to prevent invasive and noxious weed establishment. The largest concern in the allotment would be for biennial and perennial noxious weed species to become established and not be detected, therefore not treated or controlled. Land management practices of the livestock operator would help with identification and potential expansion of weeds within the allotment.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Ole Olsen, 11/7/08

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: The Monument Butte Allotment provides healthy productive nesting habitats for golden eagles. Golden eagles are listed on the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) 2002 Birds of Conservation Concern List. This allotment contains at least ten historic golden eagle nesting sites. Monitoring of the nest locations indicates that at least one of these nest sites is active each nesting season. In some years, more than one nest site may be active.

Environmental Consequences, All Alternatives: Existing golden eagle nest locations are along sandstone cliffs and within mature juniper trees. Proposed changes to the grazing permit or continuing previously authorized use would not have adverse impacts on any of these nest

sites. There is little chance for take to occur.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist: Timothy Novotny, 10/27/08

NATIVE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS CONCERNS

A letter was sent to the Uinta and Ouray Tribal Council, Southern Ute Tribal Council, Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Council, and the Eastern Shoshone on July 11, 2007. The letter listed the grazing allotments up for renewal in FY09 and included a map of the areas. A follow up phone call was performed on August 14, 2007. No comments were received (Letter on file at the Little Snake Field Office). This project requires no additional notification.

Name of specialist and date: Robyn Watkins Morris, 10/27/08

PRIME & UNIQUE FARMLANDS

Affected Environment: There are no Prime and Unique Farmlands present within the Monument Butte Allotment.

Environmental Consequences: None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Ole Olsen, 11/7/08

T&E AND SENSITIVE ANIMALS

Affected Environment: There are no threatened or endangered species or habitats for such species within the Monument Butte Allotment.

Environmental Consequences: None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Timothy Novotny, 10/27/08

T&E AND SENSITIVE PLANTS

Affected Environment: There are no federally listed threatened or endangered or BLM sensitive plant species present on the allotment.

Environmental Consequences: None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Hunter Seim, 10/20/08

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: There are no hazardous materials present on the Monument Butte Allotment.

Environmental Consequences, All Alternatives: Potential releases of hazardous materials could occur due to vehicular access for livestock management operations. Coolant, oil, and fuel are materials that could potentially be released. Due to the limited amount of vehicular activity that would be required, the potential for releases of any of these materials is low and if a release were to occur, it would be minimal and highly localized and not result in an adverse impact to the allotment.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Mark Lowrey 10/14/08

WATER QUALITY - GROUND

Affected Environment: There can be water flowing through near-surface and over surface exposures of Cretaceous Mancos Shale on the Monument Butte Allotment.

Environmental Consequences, All Alternatives: Surface disturbance such as livestock grazing and associated activities would have no affect to ground water quality.

Mitigative Measures: None.

Name of specialist and date: Marilyn D. Wegweiser, 10/28/2008

WATER QUALITY - SURFACE

Affected Environment: Runoff waters from BLM lands within the Monument Butte Allotment flow to ephemeral tributaries of Morapos Creek. Morapos Creek is a perennial tributary of the Williams Fork River. Morapos Creek needs to have water quality that will support Aquatic Life Cold 1, Recreation 1b and Agriculture. The Williams Fork River needs to have water quality that will support Aquatic Life Cold 2, Recreation 1a, Water Supply and Agriculture; this river segment is designated use protected. The water quality within these streams is currently supporting the classified uses they need to support.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: The Proposed Action Alternative would implement a shorter season of use, a two-week delay of the grazing period in the spring and a change of livestock from horses to cattle. Each of these elements alone would improve the forage and soil resource conditions within the allotment, provided that proper grazing use of the forage resource is not exceeded. As upland resource conditions improve surface water quality would experience beneficial impacts.

Environmental Consequences, No Action Alternative: No change to the water quality of runoff waters from the Monument Butte Allotment would be expected, with proper grazing use of forage resources. Water quality would continue to support classified uses.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Ole Olsen, 11/7/08

WETLANDS/RIPARIAN ZONES

Affected Environment: There are no riparian resources present within the Monument Butte Allotment.

Environmental Consequences: None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Ole Olsen, 11/7/08

WILD & SCENIC RIVERS

Affected Environment: Not Present

Environmental Consequences: None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: G. Robison, 11/04/08

WSAs, WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

Affected Environment: Not Present

Environmental Consequences: None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: G. Robison, 11/04/08

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

SOILS

Affected Environment: The primary soils on the steeper terrain in the Monument Butte Allotment are the Torriorthents-Rock outcrop, sandstone complex, 25 to 75 percent slopes and the Ustorthents, frigid-Borolls complex, 25 to 75 percent slopes. The Pinelli loam, 3 to 12 percent slopes soil occupies the largest area within the allotment where the majority of livestock grazing would occur, followed by Cochetopa loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes and Layoint-Moosed-Berlake complex, 1 to 20 percent slopes.

The Pinelli, Cochetopa and Berlake soils have deep soil profiles and a high water holding capacity. The remaining soils have a low to very low water holding capacity, mainly due to shallow and moderately deep soil profiles. The Pinelli and Cochetopa soils are derivatives of shale and exhibit moderately low permeability. The erosion hazard with moderate disturbance introduced is slight to severe for all soils in the allotment and this is largely dependent on slope. All of these soils are suited for livestock grazing.

On soils where grazing would be expected mosses are the most observable biological soil crust and are found below the edge of the brush canopy where trampling effects are lessened and sunlight is available. Cyanobacteria is present in the plant inter-spaces where plant and litter cover is not abundant and is typically more abundant on the less productive soils in the allotment. Dense cheatgrass, when present, in plant inter-spaces can reduce the abundance of cyanobacteria and reduce the effectiveness of its soil binding capability needed during periods of drought.

Environmental Consequences, All Alternatives: Soil compaction and depleted soil cover are the most common impacts to the soil resources as a result of livestock grazing. These effects will increase on areas receiving concentrated livestock use (such as the loafing areas) under either alternative. Trail areas and concentrated use areas are typically more pronounced with longer grazing periods due to the livestock behavior and patterns of use. Repetitive grazing pressure under longer grazing periods would reduce the potential for plant re-growth. With grazing use that did not exceed the terms and conditions of the permit forage resource on the majority of the public lands within the allotment would have adequate plant and litter cover remaining after the grazing period to protect the soil resource. Grazing use that did not exceed the terms and conditions of the permit would equate to slight soil disturbance, allowing the soils to remain stable.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: The Proposed Action Alternative would allow two additional weeks in the spring before the start of the previously authorized grazing period and shorten the grazing period in the fall. Delaying spring use would allow upland soils more time to dry out from winter and spring moisture, decreasing the potential for soil compaction and churning from hoof action. Vegetation would also have additional time to grow

above and below ground biomass, which would promote better soil cover and denser, deeper rooting. The reduced season of use in the fall would also reduce the potential of grazing impacts on wet and moist soils, enhance the growth of biological soil crusts and improve surface roughness with an increased persistence of freeze-thaw effects. In addition to improving soil properties for infiltration, shortening fall use would reduce disturbance to the insulating qualities of an early snowpack.

Environmental Consequences, No Action Alternative: The earlier grazing use in the spring under this alternative would increase the potential of churning wet soils from hoof action and damaging seedlings and biological soil crusts. Emerging vegetation would be stressed from trampling and defoliation and compaction of moist soils would increase. The longer season of use in the fall under the No Action Alternative would exacerbate any detrimental impacts in areas of concentrated use and reduce the benefits derived from freeze-thaw effects on the soil surface.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Ole Olsen, 11/19/08

UPLAND VEGETATION

Affected Environment: This allotment contains stands of Utah juniper, stands of Gambel oak, and abundant browse species such as serviceberry and bitterbrush that receives heavy annual utilization from wildlife. Throughout the allotment native perennial grasses include needle and thread, bluebunch wheatgrass, bluegrass spp., and Indian ricegrass as the primary species. There is an abundance of annual grasses at various densities in different locations. Forbs are present but in less abundance than would be expected for this area.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: Most of the public land receives minimal livestock use due to steep topography, excessive brush cover, and lack of water. Taking this into consideration, the proposed action with a shorter season of use and changing class of livestock to lighter ruminant grazing strategies, compared to equid, horses consume about 60% to 70% more forage than cattle when quality is comparable, would have neutral to beneficial impacts to herbaceous upland vegetation, and no affect to woody upland vegetation.

Environmental Consequences, No Action Alternative: The potential for adverse impacts to upland vegetation would increase by continuing a longer season of use and the greater quantity of forage required related to the grazing and dietary characteristics of equine.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Mark Lowrey, 10/14/08

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC

Affected Environment: There is no aquatic wildlife habitat within the Monument Butte Allotment.

Environmental Consequences: All alternatives, None

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Timothy Novotny, 10/27/08

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL

Affected Environment: The Monument Butte Allotment provides year round habitat for mule deer and elk including severe winter range for both species. A variety of small mammals, songbirds and reptiles may also be found within this allotment. There is heavy use by mule deer and elk. Serviceberry and bitterbrush plants are heavily browsed. Lots of fecal droppings from mule deer and elk are present throughout the allotment. The heavy levels of utilization attributed to big game use have degraded winter range habitats within this allotment.

Environmental Consequences All Alternatives: The proposed season of use change and class of livestock change or continuing with previously authorized use would not contribute to already degraded winter range habitats, or have negative impacts to wildlife habitats in general.

Mitigative Measures: None

Name of specialist and date: Timothy Novotny, 10/27/08

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, those brought forward for analysis will be formatted as shown above.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Fluid Minerals		MDW 10/28/08	
Forest Management	MAL 09/25/08		
Hydrology/Ground		MDW 10/28/08	
Hydrology/Surface		OO 11/07/08	
Paleontology		MDW 10/30/08	
Range Management	MAL 09/25/08		
Realty Authorizations		MAA 10/27/08	
Recreation/Travel Mgmt		GMR 11/04/08	
Socio-Economics		MAA 10/27/08	

Solid Minerals		JAM 10/25/08	
Visual Resources		GMR 11/04/08	
Wild Horse & Burro Mgmt	MAL 09/25/08		

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: This allotment and areas surrounding have historically been grazed by both sheep and cattle. Numerous maintained and unmaintained roads exist throughout the area, including on the allotment. These roads are used regularly by local residents and ranchers as well by as the primary recreation users in the area, hunters. Wildlife populations in the area are high, especially for deer and elk that compete with livestock for available forage throughout the area. The Proposed Action to continue grazing on this allotment is compatible with other uses, both historic and present, and would not add any new or detrimental impacts to those that are already present.

STANDARDS

PLANT AND ANIMAL COMMUNITY (animal) STANDARD:

Utilization in excess of 40% on serviceberry and bitterbrush by big game animals is occurring. While utilization levels are considered high, this allotment is still meeting this standard. Lower population levels of both mule deer and elk would be necessary to see improvements to big game habitats in this allotment. Current levels of livestock use are not impacting wildlife habitats within the Monument Butte Allotment. This standard is currently being met and would continue to be met under either alternative.

Name of specialist and date: Timothy Novotny 10/27/08

SPECIAL STATUS, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (animal) STANDARD:

The BLM special status species, golden eagle, and golden eagle nesting sites are present within the Monument Butte Allotment. Livestock grazing activities are not affecting this species. This standard is being met and would continue to be met under either alternative. There are no other threatened, endangered or special status species present within the Monument Butte Allotment.

Name of specialist and date: Timothy Novotny 10/27/08

PLANT AND ANIMAL COMMUNITY (plant) STANDARD:

Vegetative components include native plant species expected to occur on this allotment. Overall, vegetation composition, diversity, and production are less than what would be expected for this area. Almost all of the browse species are in moderate to poor vigor, the result of heavy annual big game utilization. In certain areas it is noted that sagebrush is becoming more decadent and sparse and rabbitbrush is increasing and vigorous. This standard is not met, with the causal factors being historic overgrazing (sheep) being the driving factor in cheatgrass presence, and annual utilization exceeding 40% on browse species by big game contributing to decreased diversity and low vigor in some browse species. Current livestock authorization and the

proposed action will not contribute to this standard not being met and might contribute toward this standard moving toward being met.

Name of specialist and date: Mark Lowrey, 10/10/08

**SPECIAL STATUS, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (plant)
STANDARD:**

There are no federally listed threatened or endangered or BLM sensitive plant species present on the allotment. This standard does not apply.

Name of specialist and date: Hunter Seim, 10/20/08

RIPARIAN SYSTEMS STANDARD:

There are no wetlands or riparian zones on public lands within the Monument Butte Allotment. This standard does not apply.

Name of specialist and date: Timothy Novotny, 10/27/08

WATER QUALITY STANDARD:

There are no water bodies, or perennial water channels on this allotment. Surface runoff flows into Moropos Creek which is a tributary to the Williams Fork River. Both of these water bodies are supporting classified uses. There is no source of ground water impairment on this allotment. Both alternatives would meet this standard.

Name of specialist and date: Mark Lowrey, 10/10/08

UPLAND SOILS STANDARD:

This allotment has medium diversity associated with slope, aspect, and elevation, with one limiting factor as the occurrence and abundance of cheatgrass. There is no sign of erosion and the soils are well protected with vegetation and litter cover. The exception to this is soils in a small area (approximately 80 acres) on a very steep slope with an east aspect where Utah juniper occurs. In this area some rill and gully erosion is evident but is not excessive to what would be anticipated to occur on this site. Based on lack of utilization from current domestic livestock use it is agreed that historic overgrazing (sheep) may have been the driving factor in cheatgrass presence. This standard is currently being met and would continue to be met under the either alternative.

Name of specialist and date: Mark Lowrey, 10/10/08

PERSONS/AGENCIES CONSULTED: Uintah and Ouray Tribal Council, Colorado Native American Commission, Colorado State Historic Preservation Office, Larry Jordan

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment 1, Allotment Map
Attachment 2, Standard and Common Terms and Conditions

SIGNATURE OF PREPARER:

DATE SIGNED:

SIGNATURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWER:

DATE SIGNED:

Finding of No Significant Impact

The environmental assessment, analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action, has been reviewed. With the implementation of the attached mitigation measures there is a finding of no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

1. Beneficial, adverse, direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts have been disclosed in the EA. Analysis indicated no significant impacts on society as a whole, the affected region, the affected interests or the locality. The physical and biological effects are limited to the Little Snake Resource Area and adjacent land.
2. Public health and safety would not be adversely impacted. There are no known or anticipated concerns with project waste or hazardous materials.
3. There would be no adverse impacts to regional or local air quality, prime or unique farmlands, known paleontological resources on public land within the area, wetlands, floodplain, areas with unique characteristics, ecologically critical areas or designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.
4. There are no highly controversial effects on the environment.
5. There are no effects that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk. Sufficient information on risk is available based on information in the EA and other past actions of a similar nature.
6. This alternative does not set a precedent for other actions that may be implemented in the future to meet the goals and objectives of adopted Federal, State or local natural resource related plans, policies or programs.
7. No cumulative impacts related to other actions that would have a significant adverse impact were identified or are anticipated.
8. Based on previous and ongoing cultural surveys, and through mitigation by avoidance, no adverse impacts to cultural resources were identified or anticipated. There are no known American Indian religious concerns or persons or groups who might be disproportionately and adversely affected as anticipated by the Environmental Justice Policy.
9. No adverse impacts to any threatened or endangered species or their habitat that was determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act were identified. If, at a future time, there could be the potential for adverse impacts, treatments would be modified or mitigated not to have an adverse effect or new analysis would be conducted.
10. This alternative is in compliance with relevant Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and requirements for the protection of the environment.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

DATE SIGNED:

ATTACHMENT #2
DOI-BLM-CO-100-2009-0001-EA
TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Standard Terms and Conditions

- 1) Grazing permit or lease terms and conditions and the fees charged for grazing use are established in accordance with the provisions of the grazing regulations now or hereafter approved by the Secretary of the Interior.
- 2) They are subject to cancellation, in whole or in part, at any time because of:
 - a. Noncompliance by the permittee/lessee with rules and regulations;
 - b. Loss of control by the permittee/lessee of all or a part of the property upon which it is based;
 - c. A transfer of grazing preference by the permittee/lessee to another party;
 - d. A decrease in the lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management within the allotment(s) described;
 - e. Repeated willful unauthorized grazing use;
 - f. Loss of qualifications to hold a permit or lease.
- 3) They are subject to the terms and conditions of allotment management plans if such plans have been prepared. Allotment management plans **MUST** be incorporated in permits and leases when completed.
- 4) Those holding permits or leases **MUST** own or control and be responsible for the management of livestock authorized to graze.
- 5) The authorized officer may require counting and/or additional or special marking or tagging of the livestock authorized to graze.
- 6) The permittee's/lessee's grazing case file is available for public inspection as required by the Freedom of Information Act.
- 7) Grazing permits or leases are subject to the nondiscrimination clauses set forth in Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1964, as amended. A copy of this order may be obtained from the authorized officer.
- 8) Livestock grazing use that is different from that authorized by a permit or lease **MUST** be applied for prior to the grazing period and **MUST** be filed with and approved by the authorized officer before grazing use can be made.
- 9) Billing notices are issued which specify fees due. Billing notices, when paid, become a part of the grazing permit or lease. Grazing use cannot be authorized during any period of delinquency in the payment of amounts due, including settlement for unauthorized use.

- 10) Grazing fee payments are due on the date specified on the billing notice and **MUST** be paid in full within 15 days of the due date, except as otherwise provided in the grazing permit or lease. If payment is not made within that time frame, a late fee (the greater of \$25 or 10 percent of the amount owed but not more than \$250) will be assessed.
- 11) No member of, or Delegate to, Congress or Resident Commissioner, after his/her election of appointment, or either before or after he/she has qualified, and during his/her continuance in office, and no officer, agent, or employee of the Department of Interior, other than members of Advisory committees appointed in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App. 1) and Sections 309 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) shall be admitted to any share or part in a permit or lease, or derive any benefit to arise therefrom; and the provision of Section 3741 Revised Statute (41 U.S.C. 22), 18 U.S.C. Sections 431-433, and 43 CFR Part 7, enter into and form a part of a grazing permit or lease, so far as the same may be applicable.

Common Terms and Conditions

- A) Grazing use will not be authorized in excess of the amount of specified grazing use (AUM number) for each allotment. Numbers of livestock annually authorized in the allotment(s) may be more or less than the number listed on the permit/lease within the grazing use periods as long as the amount of specified grazing use is not exceeded.
- B) Unless there is a specific term and condition addressing utilization, the intensity of grazing use will insure that no more than 50% of the key grass species and 40% of the key browse species current years growth, by weight, is utilized at the end of the grazing season for winter allotments and the end of the growing season for allotments used during the growing season. Application of this term needs to recognize recurring livestock management that includes opportunity for regrowth, opportunity for spring growth prior to grazing, or growing season deferment.
- C) Failure to maintain range improvements to BLM standards in accordance with signed cooperative agreements and/or range improvement permits may result in the suspension of the annual grazing authorization, cancellation of the cooperative agreement or range improvement permit, and/or the eventual cancellation of this permit/lease.
- D) Storing or feeding supplemental forage on public lands other than salt or minerals must have prior approval. Forage to be fed or stored on public lands must be certified noxious weed-free. Salt and/or other mineral supplements shall be placed at least one-quarter mile from water sources or in such a manner as to promote even livestock distribution in the allotment or pasture.
- E) Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g), the holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of

human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the allotment operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are encountered or uncovered during any allotment activities or grazing activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate vicinity and immediately contact the authorized officer. Within five working days the authorized officer will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the identified area can be used for grazing activities again.

If paleontological materials (fossils) are uncovered during allotment activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities that might further disturb such materials and contact the authorized officer. The operator and the authorized officer will consult and determine the best options for avoiding or mitigating paleontological site damage.

- F) No hazardous materials/hazardous or solid waste/trash shall be disposed of on public lands. If a release does occur, it shall immediately be reported to this office at (970) 826-5000.
- G) The permittee/lessee shall provide reasonable administrative access across private and leased lands to the BLM and its agents for the orderly management and protection of public lands.
- H) Application of a chemical or release of pathogens or insects on public lands must be approved by the authorized officer.
- I) The terms and conditions of this permit or lease may be modified if additional information indicates that revision is necessary to conform with 43 CFR 4180.